The Michigan Antique Radio Chronicle

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A QUARTERLY WRITTEN FORUM OF THE MICHIGAN ANTIQUE RADIO CLUB

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THE MICHIGAN ANTIQUE RADIO CLUB

The Michigan Antique Radio Club was founded October 19, 1985 at the Dillon Inn in Lansing, Michigan. Present at this historical meeting to found MARC were Jim and Brenda Clark, Larry Anderson, Karl Rommel, Mike Male, Dick Perry and John Kent. The purpose of the organization is to preserve the history and enhance the knowledge of radio, television, and related disciplines, with special emphasis on contributions originating in the state of Michigan. Dues for membership in M.A.R.C. are $25.00 annually (US funds) and payable in January. Officers of M.A.R.C. welcome your membership, your questions and your personal contributions to enhance the service value, growth and activities of the organization. Terms of office for Board members expire concurrently with the summer EXTRAVAGANZA meet held in Kalamazoo, Michigan. Send Correspondence to MARC, 7458 St. Auburn, Bloomfield, MI 48301. E-mail: president@michiganantiqueradio.org. **Visit our Web site at** www.michiganantiqueradio.org.

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In honor of MARC's 30 years, we are devoting this *Chronicle* to the club's history. Many of the pages are filled with photos, most supplied by Jim and Brenda Clark, and Bruce and Marcia Tanner. Some came from my own archives. There are so many photos I would have included if only more space was available. Any errors, snarky remarks, and other oversites in the captions are mine, for which I take very limited responsibility, as my memory has its limits.

Steve Enzer, Editor

Perspectives

MILESTONES

Yes, it has been 30 years. In an era when electronic 'must have' gadgets go from introduction to museum pieces in less than a decade, it is downright wonderful that I can say the Michigan Antique Radio Club has survived over three decades. I hope you are enjoying this edition of the Chronicle and enjoying memories of Radios and Radio meets. The success of the Michigan Antique Radio Club is due entirely to the tireless work of volunteers over the years. Since these folks are volunteers we have to say their work is priceless – or beyond value. Be sure to thank a current or past volunteer for their efforts.

EXTRAVAGANZA IS COMING!

In fact, it is just around the corner. If you haven't made your reservation, do not delay! The hotel deadline is approaching and you will want to be sure to get your spot in our air-conditioned flea market. Don't forget, set up starts at 3:00 pm on Thursday, July 7th and runs until 9:00 pm on Thursday. The doors will open at 8:00 am on Friday, July 8th and Saturday, July 9th.

I am happy to report that Cledis Estes will be our auctioneer for the Friday afternoon main auction. So once again a known professional will handle the proceedings! To insure a lively auction, we will be retaining our 'buy back' format for this year.

I am also happy to report that the Friday program will be ably covered by our own Mike Dale. Mike, as a respected expert, will discuss the operation of Vacuum tubes and their application to radios and audio amplifiers. Be sure to leave some time to drop in.

Our theme for this year is "Department Store Radios" and I think just about everyone has at least one of these in your collection. So plan on sharing your set in our contest. And speaking of the contest, plan on sharing some other piece from your collection as well.

Plan on joining us for the President's Reception on Friday evening. This is a great opportunity to enjoy the social side of the hobby and visit with other collectors and their families. We feature a "Show and Tell" table at the reception. At this event, you can bring some strange (or not so strange) part of your collection and tell all of us what makes it special and/or interesting – particularly to you. Last year this produced some really intriguing items so look around your collection for something to share.

THINGS TO DO IN KALAMAZOO

You might want to spend an extra night in Kalamazoo since there are many fun things to do in the area. I can personally highly recommend the Air Zoo and the nearby Gilmore Car museum in addition to the numerous attractions in Western Michigan within an hours drive.

See y'all in Kalamazoo!

John Reinicke
President

NOTES FROM THE SERVICE SHOP

No. 94

by John Reinicke

A Look Back with Art

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I had been able to get an early start for my trip to Centerburg. As a result, I was able to arrive well before suppertime. Ken and Betty's antique shop was still open and we had agreed to meet with Art and his wife at a nice restaurant north of town. Since it would be a while before we would be "out on the town", Art invited me to his shop for a visit. As it turns out, it was a quiet afternoon and the two of us decided to close the shop for the day and to enjoy an adult beverage on Art's front porch.

We were both enjoying the warmer than average early spring day. Although the "front yard" in front of the porch was the roof of his shop, the tree across the street was in full, fragrant, bloom and early spring flowers were in colorful evidence. A bowl of snacks rounded out all that was needed for conversation.

"So I understand MARC is 30 years old." Art opened the conversation. "So how long have you been involved with the club?"

"Well, I am not a charter member if that might be what you are asking." I responded with a smile. "I didn't miss it by much though. I moved to Michigan in November of '85 and in spring of '87 a co-worker of mine, Rob, mentioned that he had run into a fellow at the Royal Oak Flea market the weekend before. Rob had learned of this new club that had just formed called the Michigan Antique Radio Club and that they were having a spring meet in Jackson. The two of us decided that it would be fun to check it out and we agreed to drive to the spring meet. It was held in a city park and it was the first time I had encountered a swap meet that was dedicated to old radios. There were about a dozen cars in the lot with the enthusiasts doing trunk sales – and all of them had lots of old radios. There was a contest being held in the park building and we both enjoyed ourselves. I remember that it was an extraordinarily warm day for May which made for a leisurely walk around."

Art smiled. "So, did you buy anything?"

"How could I resist! The prices were all so reasonable. As it turns out, the first radio that I bought was a GE table radio with book matched veneer doors, which is still in my living room. I bought it from Abe Lincoln, a club charter member, for the princely sum of five bucks. For that price it was a bit of a chicken poop covered wreck and it would become my first restoration project. Rob and I managed to fill up the back of my

car and were hooked and joined the club at that meet."

"So what other memories come to mind?" Art inquired.

I took a swallow of my beverage and leaned back in the chair. "Wow, that is a good question. In the early days, the meets were held in various locations around the state and most involved trunk sales. Of course, the weather doesn't always cooperate and I remember a meet in Dearborn that was a rain-drenched washout. After that, the meets moved indoors. In the early days, the club was growing and everyone was enthusiastic. As more people discovered the hobby, the radio prices started to climb and that inspired folks to really dig into attics, barns, estate auctions and rummage sales and old radios really did come out of the woodwork. At one time, the club was having six meets a year until the board decided that that was way too much work.

"I must say, as I think back there are a lot of mental snap shots that come to mind. Most are pleasant and some, well, require a bit of time to get the perspective.

"I remember EXTRAVAGANZA '88 at the Dillon Inn. There must have been close to a dozen cars in the loop in front of the hotel with trunk sales. I particularly remember a presentation by Bob Beemer who was the son of radio star Brace Beemer. Bob related tales of growing up with radio's "Lone Ranger". The presentation was a wonderful perspective of how those radio shows were put together. After all, the shows were live and the writers had to come up with 5 shows a week, which is quite an undertaking. But what sticks in my head the most is first that the room was really crowded and quite warm and second, how infectious the Lone Ranger character must be. Like TV's Clayton Moore, Brace assumed the persona in his personal life. As a personal observation, I suppose it is better to take on the 'good guy' persona as opposed to the psychopath persona that seems to be the rage for today's movie superhero."

Art laughed. "Yea, I would say so."

With a prompt from Art, I continued. "I do remember a lot of other magic moments from Extravaganzas. The '99 "On the Air" show that Bruce Tanner directed made for a floor show that rivaled any that you would seen in a theater or night club. The combination of old radio show re-enactments and music was fantastic.

"At the '90 meet I saw my first Sparton Nocturne and was, as they say, blown away. I also saw my first Crosley WLW set at an Extravaganza. What sticks in my head about the WLW is that the radio was taller than Sally Dzick when she stood next to it.

"The contests at Extravaganza are always memorable and I think every year has produced at least one entry that I had never seen or seen since for that matter. Jay Volke's speakers are rare and beautiful. John Johnson always brought some really rare and wonderful stuff as well, but the thing that sticks in my head is in '02 when we did "Crosley" as theme, he brought in an 'Icy Ball'. The 'Icy-hot' brought refrigeration to a lot of really remote locations for the first time since all you needed to charge it for a day of operation was a camp fire.

"Another thing that comes to mind is over the years we have seen a number of really interesting miniatures, usually in the form of old time radio shops. These things are beautiful and really are museum pieces rather than dollhouses. There have been a number of really interesting displays as well.

"Of course, not all of the displays were exactly ascetically wonderful, but they all invited a closer look. I remember the year we did Heathkit, one contestant made up a huge pyramid of "Benton Har-

bor Lunch Boxes". There must have been two dozen or so of them."

Art Interrupted, "Benton Harbor Lunch Box??"

I smiled. "Oh yea, you are a ham and you don't remember? In the 60's Heathkit introduced what started as a citizen's band transceiver kit in a box about the size of one of those kids rectangular lunch boxes. With the exploding popularity of the citizen's band, the FCC upped the ante on technical specifications for CB radios and that kit would no longer do. However, recognizing that they had a neat package, Heathkit converted the design to use as low cost, six and two meter Amateur transceivers, which proved to be enormously successful. Which brings us back to the display at EXTRAVAGANZA. Since these things were sold to Amateurs they were often subjected to modifications to suit the particular owner. The cool thing about the pyramid was that I don't think there was a single one of them that was original and all had distinctive modifications. Plus, the paint job on these sets changed over the years and that too, added to the effect.

"And all of us will remember the 'barn find of all time' the Sparton Nocturne that was auctioned at Extravaganza '13. The expression on the seller's face was worth the price of admission and then some."

"A couple of years we had magicians who really did do some pretty fair magic, which we all enjoyed. I should add most years included really good musical groups.

Art nodded in agreement. "You mentioned things that required time to gain perspective. What were you thinking of?"

I chuckled. "Well..." (an only fair Jack Benny followed by a pause) "One year we had an Elvis impersonator as entertainment and this guy was a legend only in his own mind. The resemblance to Elvis was only in his clothes as a caricature and the rest was simply awful.

"One year the spring meet was in Traverse City and, as fate would have it, there was an ice storm on Friday night. Given the condition of the roads, the turn out was quite surprising.

"For a number of years we had a spring meet in Midland. This was never a well attended meet but just about every year a really rare radio would show up for Radio Rescue. One year it was one of those baseball radios. One year it was a green Emerson that brought north of three grand at the auction that year. But I think my favorite was a Tucker car radio, new in the box. As it turns out, Motorola made far more radios for Tuckers than Tucker made cars but it was still very cool.

"I remember one year at Grand Rapids I sold a pair of speakers before I could get them out of the back of the truck and that same year, in Midland, I tripled my investment in a Crosley before I could load it to take it home.

"There were some misadventures that, fortunately, turned out to be not as bad as they might have been. One year lighting struck our PA system and opened up one speaker. To my surprise, I was able to repair it with a bit of wire and a soldering iron under the tent. One year a car caught fire in the flea market and fortunately someone saw it before any serious damage was done. The car needed new carpet, smelled funny and a wiring harness took some electrical tape, but that was all.

"One year, not so long ago, an early morning rain storm doused the extension cord going to the tent which made for a momentary spectacular ball of fire. It blinked the lights in the hotel, but again, we were lucky and no serious damage was done.

"In the mid 90's we got a call from some folks up in the Thumb that had a basement full of old radio "stuff" that

they wanted to donate to the club. It was a Saturday in April that my friend Rob, drove up to check it out and the following week end we took my truck to retrieve the collection. What neither of us knew was that they had replaced the septic field in the fall and it ran under the drive in front of the house. When Rob had been there the week before, the ground was still frozen. In the intervening week, the ground had thawed. I pulled up in front of the house and as soon as the truck stopped moving, it promptly sunk in the mud in all that disturbed earth. In fact, it sank right up to the rocker panels to the point it almost blocked the doors. I always carry a tow strap and I figured, since we were way out in the country, we could get a "John Deere" tow. As it turns out, the residents had been out for the morning and they returned with a truckload of books just after we arrived. With the load of books, their truck had traction and we used their truck and the tow strap to extract us from the mud.

"Of course, by the time we had gotten my truck out, it was covered with an inch to several inches of mud. I parked on the road in front of the house and we cleared off enough of the mud to get the tailgate open. It took us a bit longer to carry all the stuff out to the road, but at least we didn't get stuck again."

I paused and Art gave me a thoughtful look. "Boy, I'll bet you have a lot of tales to relate from your adventures. Maybe you should save some for this evening so we can all enjoy them." His thoughtful look continued. "You know, if you think about it, an awful lot has happened in the electronics field since the club was founded. You guys are doing Vintage Electronics Expos as meets these days and if you consider 'vintage' as something that is 25 years old, then there are vintage items that have been created since the club was founded!"

I smiled and nodded. "Indeed, quite so, as your old boss would say."

Art smiled at the reference and memory. "Picked that up from reading those diaries, eh? " I nodded and Art continued. "The club was founded in October of 1985, right?" Art asked and again I nodded. "Well I heard recently on the radio that the first Internet domain name, symbolics.com, was registered on March 15th of that year. By the time the club was founded there were a grand total of six registered domain names as opposed to the literally hundreds of millions that are now registered.

"At that time, the Internet was a rather exclusive network of computers on private leased lines and it would be the 90's before the World Wide Web would come into existence. In fact, it was 1990 before Tim Berners-Lee invented the very first web browser. He called it, WorldWideWeb and later it became Mosaic. Of course, most of us didn't encounter a web browser until Windows and the MAC came along in 1993 and I think the browser most of us used for the first time was Netscape which hit the market in 1994. So all of the rather vast expanse of networking has come to be in the last twenty years or so."

I interjected, "And we did all that browsing on a dial up modem!"

It was my time for the thoughtful look. "In '85, my personal computer was a NCR Decision Mate 5 and it would run CPM or DOS from 5 inch floppy drives. I had Word Star, Calc Star, Data Star and the kids played Zorks as a game. Any other programming took Basic and, as you mentioned, there was no web access. Even with my employee discount it had set me back over three grand. In those days, everyone was slugging it out to see who would have the dominant personal computer and as we know now, IBM and Microsoft would win out.

"Do you remember all those AOL discs that came in the mail?" Art smiled. "I think most of them wound up as drink coasters, hung from trees as bird chasers, or used as windshield ice scrapers.""

Art sat back and rubbed his chin. "Let me see, in 1985 cameras still used (dramatic pause) what was it? (pause) oh yeah, film! If you want to talk about disruptive technology look what happened to Kodak. George Eastman really invented the snap shot – which was a hunting term at the time, by the way – in the late 19th century and really popularized photography. To top it off, Kodak was the first to market with a digital camera and yet they decided that the market would never move to what they called video still cameras and bet the company on film. I'll bet that George is revolving in his grave."

I grinned. "Kodak wasn't the only company to miss what was going on. By 1985, RCA had parlayed what had been a dominant world consumer electronics market share in 1970 to oblivion. All of us have fond memories of Heathkit, but by '85 they too had pretty much run the course.

"Isn't ironic that the original dominant mail order retailers like Sears and Montgomery Wards would let their market be captured by Amazon. Kmart would be an early adopter of computer technology and yet they let Walton out mart them."

Art held up his hand. "Whoa there, stay on target. You can collect cameras and Heathkits but you can't collect retail stores unless it is old catalogs. So, let me see. In 1985 television sets still used a great big tube for the picture. In fact TV sets and computers still used the good 'ol CRT well into the 90's and beyond. In 1985 a big screen television set was rear projection in a huge box that certainly couldn't be hung on the wall. Of course, in those days, televisions were still analog using the NTSC format devised by RCA in 1953. Sharp was the first to market with a flat screen LCD color set in 1988 and the first high definition broadcast wouldn't come along until 1996. So you could say that television as we now know it has pretty much been invented since the club was founded in '85. If you are looking for future collection opportunities, there must be a bunch there."

You could see the 'light bulb' go off in Art's head. "Oh yea! Do we all remember Y2K?"

I grinned, "Yep, we sure do. Since computers used just two digits for the date in the early days the concern was things would get confused as computers thought zero zero was 1900 instead of 2000. The world as we knew it was going to crash with the computers at the stroke of midnight of the new year. I know one chap, a real survivalist, who stocked up on ammunition and filled his basement with canned food and many, many 55 gallon barrels of water. Of course all Y2K did do was make for a lot of work for programmers the year before and when the clock struck midnight precisely nothing happened. The lights stayed on and the few glitches that did come up appeared as completely minor sidelines in the news."

Art was still rubbing his chin. "And speaking of disruptive technology, consider what happened to the telephone. When the club was founded, relatively few folks were using cell phones but the number was growing quickly. At the time, they were 'flip phones' with that little stub of an antenna sticking out of the top. We all thought of them as the actual implementation of the communicators from 'Star Trek'. Before long, they included a camera and the ability to send text messages."

This time the light bulb went off in my head. "And in 1996 the Palm Pilot came out with its graffiti text input. You just used a little stylus to make sort of short hand gestures to enter notes and

keep track of your calendar and personal contacts. And the cool thing was that it would sync with the calendar in Outlook on your desktop computer. The success of the Palm Pilot inspired a bunch of imitator personal digital assistants, or PDA's. I personally had a Dell that ran Windows CE. At the time I wondered if they would become the famous 'Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy'.

Art laughed at my reference to Douglas Adams' British Radio comedy series and books. "Didn't last long, did they? Wow, talk about collecting opportunities. They were all small and if you can find one I'll bet it will be cheap.

"Of course, what spelled the doom of PDA's was the introduction of the Blackberry by the Canadian company, Research in Motion. The Blackberry came out in 1999 and became the darling of business types the world over. For the first time, they could check and send email on a portable device that also included a camera. Of course, the defining feature of the Blackberry was the cute little keyboard with real, if tiny, tactile keys. To add to the appeal, they offered a proprietary secure network for the email. To make the email useful, of course it included contacts and calendar information."

I held up my hand, "The advent of the twenty first century really did herald the era of dramatic advances. Think about the music business. When the club was founded, CD sales were well underway, the market for vinyl records was dead and the sales of audiocassettes were declining rapidly. We all migrated to the convenience and good sound of the CD's. But in 2001 Steve Jobs upended the whole industry with the introduction of the iPod. Of course, the iPod was not the first portable digital music device but what made it revolutionary was that it was a part of a complete system. The original included what was for the time, a really big miniature hard drive along with a slick display and operations interface that proved to be almost as intuitive as the volume knob on your old radio. But the real kicker was the inclusion of the iTunes store. It was now very easy to download music and no song was over 99 cents. The artists got paid and it provided legal downloads of music. Not all artists embraced iTunes as a means to distribute their work, but most did. In October of '03 Apple opened up the iTunes stores to Windows users and the sales of iPods and all sorts of audio material took off. The Podcast was born and you could listen to any number of programs. Of course, these days, the store collection includes video shows as well. My first iPod was the Nano that I bought just after it came out in '05.

"I got so enamored of the idea of a portable player, that I bought a fancy sound card for my laptop and proceeded to load a lot of my vinyl collection into the player. I had a lot of Beatles on my iPod long before Apple and the Beatles would come to terms and the Beatles would be available from the store."

Art held up his hand. "If we are talking disruptive technology, how about disruptive social interfaces." I shot him a quizzical look. "In 2004 Facebook came on line for the first time. It started out as just one of those crazy things that college students do but another bit of disruptive technology would make Facebook pervasive throughout the world.

"In 2007, Steve Jobs introduced the iPhone. Like the iPod, it was not the first 'smartphone' - that title would have to go to the Blackberry. But like the iPod, it came as a part of a complete environment. In one slick package you have a phone, a camera and completely portable computer functions. Your calendar, your email, your contacts, your reminders, combined with internet access were included in this slick pocket-able package. And all of it interfaced seamlessly with your computer. To top it off, you

could buy literally hundreds of thousands of 'apps' that would do everything from play games to provide a map of the sky.

"With good cameras, these things became the ideal way for folks to share photos. Facebook was now completely portable and not the only way to share photos and videos. The iPhone was a huge success and the really competitive smartphone marketplace was off and running.

"The competition resulted in an all out war of new features and ever faster processors. With a smart phone, you no longer need a computer, a GPS, a camera or much of anything else. Your whole existence can be contained in one package.

"Digital cameras, GPS gadgets, and PDAs may have been disruptive technology, but the smart phone out disrupted them. All of those snap shot cameras, Garmins, and Palm Pilots came into existence and have become collector pieces since the club was founded!

"Think about the disruption to a couple of other really old industries as well. Just ask anyone under the age of 30 if they have a landline phone or wrist watch."

It was my turn for observations. "Sometimes, old technology can make something of a comeback. In the past few years, vinyl records have reappeared as something that is cool. A growing number of hipsters have discovered the warm and inviting sound of analog reproduction. In fact a Detroit record store has ordered new record presses to keep up with demand. All at once there is a demand for old record players and linear analog amplification. The price for tube type equipment has skyrocketed and even solid-state amplifiers and receivers have escalated in price. It will be interesting to see what the studios do for recording since magnetic tape is no longer made. Who knows, maybe even old reel-to-reel tape recorders will stage a comeback.

"It will also be interesting to see what happens to radio itself. A lot of the old AM stations have gone dark and, in fact, I think the AM band throughout Europe has gone dark. I used to enjoy taking an old AM radio on trips to the north woods to see what I could receive but these days, there just isn't much. Even sports are moving to the FM band. The sales of music on iTunes has been declining because folks are now getting their music on streaming services which is, well, a lot like radio."

Art chuckled. "The future is hard to predict indeed. I want to know what happened to our shiny jumpsuits and flying cars of the predictions of our youth."

"Have you guys been watching the time?" It was Art's wife at the front door. "Don't you think we should be on our way?" Art and I both displayed our vintage by simultaneously checking our wristwatches.

We grabbed our glasses and the bowl of snacks and headed for the door.

"I'll drive." Art said.

"You're on," I responded.

Author's note: I included personal memories of club events and individuals. It was not my intention to overlook anyone's considerable contributions to the club or club events. The success of the Michigan Antique Radio club is due to the efforts of a dedicated board and volunteers over the decades. The cast of characters has changed, but the passion for the hobby has not.

A Radio Club is Born

By Jim and Brenda Clark

Back in the early 1980s I recall attending a farm auction just west of Lansing, Michigan where I lived at the time. It was a large estate sale and thus it meant I had to invest the entire day and wait for those items to be auctioned off I was interested in. In addition to the standard fare of farm and household items, furniture, etc. there was a number of 1920s battery radios, speakers and tubes. Once those items finally came up for sale I found myself bidding against the same fellow on almost every item. It was just the two of us. After paying for my purchases and loading my haul into my vehicle, I searched out the fellow I had been bidding against. It turns out he lived on the west side of the state and had been collecting antique radios, etc. for 20+ years. He knew of no other antique radio collectors let alone any clubs! A few weeks later I took him up on his offer to visit him in order to view his collection. I was overwhelmed! He had so many antique radios, speakers, etc. that it nearly filled up his entire house! By the way, he was married and his wife fully supported his hobby!!

After I started collecting antique radios in 1970 I eventually learned about the AWA (Antique Wireless Association) and later about the Antique Radio Club of Illinois (ARCI) and the Indiana Historical Radio Society (IHRS) – but alas, there was no such entity in Michigan. After my experience with the fellow at the auction described above, Brenda and I discussed the possibility of putting together a swap meet in Lansing, MI and invite anyone/everyone we knew of that had an interest in antique radios. We searched out a location and settled on the Marshall Street Armory in Lansing, MI for our first swap meet, which was held May 5, 1984. Based upon the success of that event, we held two subsequent swap meets at that same facility – those being October 13, 1984 and April 20, 1985. We eventually outgrew that facility and moved our next swap meet to the Dillon Inn in Lansing, MI on September 21, 1985. After the success of that swap meet, it was evident to Brenda and I that there was enough interest to formally and officially form the Michigan Antique Radio Club. Thereafter a couple of organizational meetings took place and the Michigan Antique Radio Club was officially founded October 19, 1985. Those that were part of those initial organizational meetings were our founding members: Karl Rommel, Dick Perry, John Kent, Mike Male, Larry Anderson, Brenda and myself.

Larry Anderson volunteered to host MARC's very first "official" swap meet which took place at the President's Inn in Grand Rapids, MI on January 25, 1986. (Note: the hotel room rates for our first official MARC swap meet in Grand Rapids, MI were $23/night. My how times have changed!!!!)

Here we are 30+ years later and Brenda and I could not be more proud of the success and longevity of the Michigan Antique Radio Club. MARC has grown way beyond anything we could have envisioned. We would like to take this opportunity to personally thank everyone that has contributed in any way to making MARC what it is today.

Photos from the Early Days

Here are MARC's founding members: Jim Clark, Brenda Clark, Larry Anderson, Karl Rommel, Mike Male, and Dick Perry. John Kent, another founder, is not shown.

This early meet, sponsored by Larry Anderson, was held at The President Inn in Grand Rapids in January, 1986. Shown in the photo are Dave and Nancy Snow, Abe Lincoln, Larry Anderson, and Jim Clark.

Early flea market sales often took place in the cul-de-sac outside the Dillon Inn. While many sold out of their car trunks, Abe Lincoln had a more sophisticated booth.

Here are Abe Lincoln and Doug Houston, again at the Dillon Inn.

In order to promote sales, Jim Clark would frequently go to each seller's spot and offer an instant auction for any item they wanted to move.

A shot of Jim Clark, Don Colbert, and Larry Anderson.

Charles Wedemeyer was a guest speaker at a Dillon Inn meet in 1987. Many from the Ann Arbor area remember Wedemeyer Electronics, a retail and wholesale electronic part supplier. In its very early days the company built radios. The only one known to exist at the time was part of the Henry Ford Museum collection. The club managed to borrow this set for the meet, and as a surprise to Charles.

Super salesman Don Colbert in 1987. What kind of car was he driving? Must have been before my time :)

Don Colbert again, perhaps a few years later than the photo at top, acting as chief auctioneer.

Nancy Colbert finally gets in a photo, along with Don and Jim Clark.

Don Colbert is smiling because he just won this AK 447 as a door prize.

No long-term MARC member will ever forget Harriet Mills (right), who managed the EXTRAVAGANZA Hospitality Booth for many years. With Harriet is Debbie Eddy.

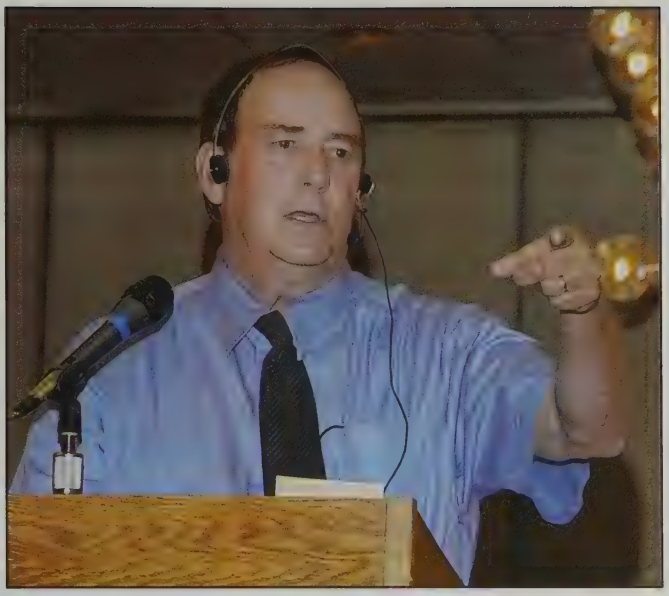
Brenda Clark and Bruce Tanner. Bruce served for many years as editor of the Chronicle.

Charlie and Marla McKee receiving the Don and Nancy Colbert Volunteer of the Year Award *in 2005.*

A.C. Stoddard built this homebrew amateur SW radio and transceiver between 1934 to 1985, and made an outstanding display for all to see, and was no surprise that it won first place in the Homebrew category at EXTRAVAGANZA 01.

Our current club president, John Reinicke, looking over entries at one of the early equipment contests.

Mary and Frank Rasada from California. Frank has been an active participant and volunteer at EXTRAVAGANZA for many years.



Richard Estes, club member and professional auctioneer who volunteered his services to our club for many years.

Dan Gutowski and Alan Jesperson performing at EXTRAVAGANZA '07.

Sally and Richard Dzick at the Midland meet in 2005. They were two exceptionally nice people who we miss.

John DenHartigh (center) hawking his truckload of consoles at EXTRAVAGANZA '06. John hosted our Fall meets in Kalamazoo.

Electronic Gravel

By Mark Oppat (Still driving old Ford vans!)

I have been a MARC member since probably 1986. I turned 30 that year... but had been restoring and collecting vintage AC powered radios since age 16. By age 17 I had a pile of radios, tubes and a set of Riders Manuals! In fact, I came in late to high school electronics class one day and the instructor said... "Hey, here comes Obsolete Oppat!" Well, I wore tag that like a badge! I stuck with obsolete electronics and turned it into my home based business, dealing parts like knobs, capacitors, chemicals, cords and my specialty, controls.

Back in 1994 I bought a beat up home in Plymouth just 3 blocks from my existing home, and began an extensive renovation of it. To haul materials, I bought an old beater 1978 Ford E150 metallic dark blue van that was for sale in my neighborhood for just $300. It needed all new brakes, some tires and whatnot, but in a month or so it was hauling stuff just like I needed. I used it also to haul parts and radios to sell at MARC shows, and I attended most of them. Back in the 90's, MARC's winter shows were in Grand Rapids. I asked a couple pals if they wanted to ride along, and they did. So, we got up very early, which to this night-owl is always a struggle. We probably left the Plymouth area around 6 AM. Since all the rear seats were out of the van, one guy sat on a milk crate behind the front seats. We had the van packed with some radios, including a HEAVY old Majestic 90 console, and LOTS of bins of small parts like resistors and capacitors and lots of miscellaneous stuff I accumulated at various 'finds'.

Remember, it's winter. Pavement was dry... bitter cold out as I recall. Everything was going fine... we were heading west on I-96, almost to exit 137 (Howell) doing "70-ish" when suddenly the rear end of my van decided it wanted to pass me on the left. Black ice. Not good. Time seemed to move very slowly. This was not due to any error of Einstein's iconic "E=MC squared" formula, but what your brain does when tragic events unfold. I was able to counter-steer, and drift into the weeds off the right shoulder, but the old van decided it wanted to be WAY over on the LEFT side of the freeway...hmm....well, OK , we are now heading straight for a concrete divider! My only thought was that 130 pound Majestic 90 was going to come sailing forward if we hit that wall "straight on" and kill us all. Somehow, we hit the wall at a glance and started sliding sideways. Now, time got REAL slow... I think it took about a week, but I was thinking as we slid that as soon as we hit some dry pavement we are going to roll. And... we did. SLOWLY.

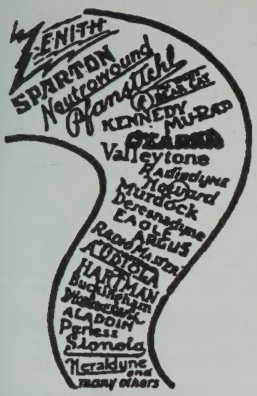
Now, none of us have our seat belts on... oh, and remember one guy is sitting on a crate, so we are all now STANDING inside a "flipped on its side" van. And, the dark blue van had spun around so now the dark roof was facing on-coming traffic in the fast lane! I thought, we gotta get out of this buggy before the next one comes along and hits whatever we hit and then would cream us! So, we get the driver's side door open and all climb out. It's still dark... and cold... but, a volunteer fireman comes along very quickly and puts his flashers on...

a SAVIOR! We all wanted out of there but he radioed a state cop and they were there pretty quick. He put us in the back of his cruiser and took all our info and began making a report. Not sure what they were doing but apparently checking all our records back to kindergarten I guess. As we sat in that cruiser for what seemed like hours, LOTS of calls came in, one after another, for others who had mostly skidded off the freeway. "There's another" was his response each time. Must have been a dozen we heard on the radio. The black ice was all over that area, apparently. No ticket and we were free to go. By now it was daylight.

Finally a wrecker came, pulled the van upright and onto the flatbed and hauled it to the next exit, to a gas station. The side mirror and door handles had been ground down due to the sliding on its side. "What do you want to do with it" he asked. I said, "Let's try her out" and sure enough, she ran. Hmm... "Well, guys, we might as well go to the show, right?". They both said they had no other plans, and mine seemed as good as any, so OK, on we went. Pavement was dried by the winter sun and we made good time but the bent front bumper rubbed on the driver side front tire every time the van dipped making an "rrrr" sound. By now we were running 3 hours late... but we showed up at the show around 11am as it was winding down... and opened the rear doors... tinkle, tinkle... parts falling out. There was huge pile of what my buddy called "Electronic Gravel" about 2" deep mixed with the bins that had held the stuff... and, the radios I had brought (don't fret, nothing valuable !). I went inside and everyone seemed to wonder where we'd been. "Rolled the van!" I said, and proceeded to haul box lots of the "gravel" into the show, and put it all on sale cheap... "By the pound" pricing. I recall it sold well, and sold the radios I brought too. The story of our special "rolled van" sale carried on for many years.

I kept that van for another 4 years then bought a red 1976 E150 that was in a little (not much) better shape and drove that buggy to Lansing for 15 years, finally sold it last August for $500 to a guy from Howell. Before he drove off, I said... "Beware the black ice" near exit 137!

Jim Leckrone at the 2001 Kalamazoo meet.



The Classified Ads

As a MARC member, you are entitled to one FREE posting per issue. Please e-mail your ad to the address below, or snail-mail a legibly written ad to: Steve Enzer, Editor, MARC Chronicle, 12740 Monroe Pike, Brooklyn, MI 49230. E-mail: enzer@binsys.com.

Please note that ads for the Fall issue are due by August 1st.

REPAIR SERVICE: I repair old tube type radios. Have stock of old type tubes and parts. Paul Colosimo, 19111 Wood St., Melvindale, MI 48122. 313-928-3780, 313-928-3322 (office).

REPAIR SERVICE: I repair all tube type radios. I have most parts and tubes in stock. Dan Schnaidt, 14160 Hay Rake Hollow, Chelsea, MI 48118-9525, 734-475-1968, 734-417-6995 (cell).

FOR SALE: ARBE-III, Universal Battery Eliminator, $159.95 + $15 S/H. Michigan residents, please add $9.00 sales tax. The ARBE-III is designed to provide the power requirements for most pre 1930's battery operated radios. The custom wound power transformer provides 3 electrically isolated supplies (A, B, C) which are all regulated and short circuit proof. Comes assembled, tested and with a full five year warranty. Please refer to our website at www.arbeiii.com for direct purchase using PayPal. You can contact me at 517-787-2985 for details on money order or personal check payments. We are also offering custom wound audio transformers for early radios. $19 each or $20 each for the center tapped version plus S/H. See our website for other items offered. You can reach me at arbeiii@yahoo.com.

FOR SALE: PARTS! We have a full stock of radio supplies, including capacitors, tubes, knobs (including our two types of real wood repros!) , bulbs, tube shields, etc. Our two specialties: repro radio dials (we bought the former Clint Blais repro dial business in 2003, and they are still the best!) and we can duplicate or repair most old volume or tone controls. Phono needles, carts and wheels too. Email any wants or see our website at www.oldradioparts.net Over 30 years servicing radios here! Mark Oppat mop-pat@comcast.net 253 Blanche St, Plymouth, MI 48170 734-455-4169 11am-9pm most days.

FOR SALE: Reproduction radio dial belts and dial cord to fit all radios. Bronze tuner cable for early RADIOLA models. Tuner repair kits for many ATWATER KENT radios. Complete details at www.Adamsradio.com. Adams Manufacturing Company, PO Box 1005, Lincoln Park MI 48146.

FOR SALE: 1% Precision tolerance 500V

silver mica capacitors and **1% Precision** 630V tubular axial PSA polystyrene film capacitors. Also for sale are 1000 Volt silver mica capacitors available in many different pF sizes. All capacitors are new production. For price list and product info, please contact Dave Cantelon, 6 Ferncrest Gate, Scarborough, Ontario, Canada, M1W 1C2 ; phone 416-502-9128; Email: justradios@yahoo.com or visit WebSite: www.justradios.com

FOR SALE: – Repro Antique Radio Dial Covers – Mark Palmquist - Retro Radio Repair www.dialcover.com 5033 Arbor Ln, Lilburn, GA 30047 (770) 923-8929 jmpalm@mindspring.com

FOR SALE: Phono and tape recorder wheels, belts. Phono needles, cartridges, 45 adapters, centerposts for all brands. Our specialty: massive inventory of V-M Factory Service parts, manuals. Also buy same for stock. Visit www.thevoiceofmusic.com or email info@thevoiceofmusic.com with what you have or what you need. Phone (248) 478-0990 anytime before 9pm. Gary Stork, 37530 E. Meadowhill, Northville, MI 48167

FOR SALE: Radio grommets, washers, and other rubber parts, repro knobs, push buttons, NOS and repro clock radio knobs, Motorola VT71/73 T.V. masks and knobs, and more. See them all at www.renovatedradios.com. Ed Schutz: blacksmith@renovatedradios.com (586) 697-6153.

FOR SALE: 1955 Lowery Double Key Board Electric Organ with beautiful Mahogany Cabinet, 55 tube unit, very powerful in its day, $400.00 selling as is. Variety of older ham tube equipment. Quite an assortment of ham magazines, 1970-1990s. Battery radios from 1920s, no horns but complete. Variety of transmitting tubes: 807, 866, 832, 815 etc. Portable Bakelite and wooden TVs early 1950s. WANTED: Kennedy console or table model radio. Can be rough needing work or restored if price is right. Phone Gary Clayton, The Olde Tyme Radio Centre, Belgrave, Ontario, Canada NOG 1E0, 519-357-4304, oldetymeradio@tnt21.com, http://www.oldtymeradio.ca/.

FOR SALE: Selling collection of Radios and TVs. Send large SASE for list. Robert Rossi, 10936 Melbourne Ave., Allen Park, MI 48101, 313-386-8321.

FREE: Heathkit GR 2000 television set. This is the ultimate Heathkit TV from 1979 and it was working when I parked it. It does not have a cabinet. I will also include a spare CRT. Just pick it up and it is all yours. Located in the Detroit metro area call or text me at 248 202 2175. John Reinicke

NOTICE: I sold an Airline Model E battery set in the silent auction of the 2014 Winter Expo in Farmington Hills. I found the headphones for this set if you want them. Please contact Rob Murrell at 248-399-2149 or murrellr@ameritech.net.

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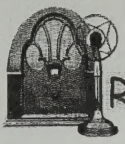

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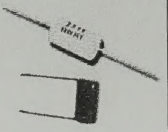

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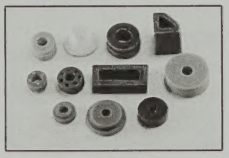

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Call for Articles

Your editor is always looking for new articles. Many of our readers have indicated a preference for articles related to collecting, as opposed to highly technical pieces. Of particular interest are personal accounts of a particular restoration you might have done, or historical accounts related to our hobby. But all subjects related to vintage electronics are welcome.

If you have an idea please feel free to discuss it with me, either by phone or email.

Steve Enzer, MARC Chronicle Editor, enzer@binsys.com. 517-592-2841

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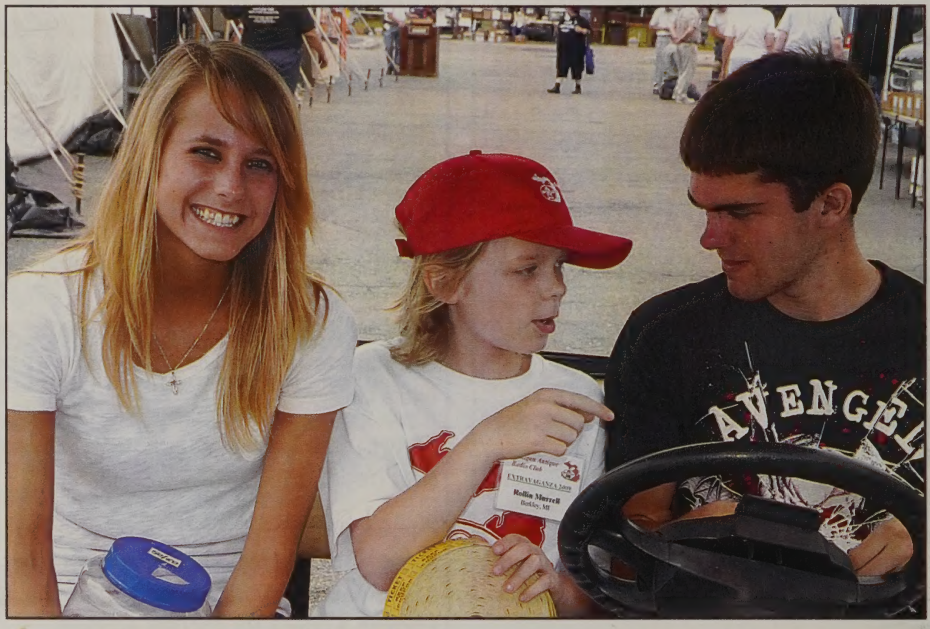
The *Chronicle* accepts paid **business card sized ads**. The ad may be in the form of your business card, or other text/graphics of business-card size. All submissions must be camera-ready. We will not do any typesetting, but simply copy what you send us. Also, your ad can appear on the MARC website at no extra charge.

Rates: $10 per single issue, $35 per year (four issues).

Please send all submissions to:
Steve Enzer, MARC Chronicle Editor,
12740 Monroe Pike, Brooklyn, MI 49230
Enclose a check for correct amount payable to MARC.

Don Colbert, along with Tyler Conley and Kevin Colbert (Don's grandson). Tyler and Kevin were regular volunteers at our meets for many years.



The young'uns getting older. Tyler Conley, Roland Murrell, and Kevin Colbert selling raffle tickets at EXTRAVAGANZA 09. A few years later and Roland would no doubt be spending more time talking with Tyler than Kevin.